

Dwight's Journal of Music,

A Paper of Art and Literature.

WHOLE No. 193.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1855.

VOL. VIII. No. 11.

Dwight's Journal of Music,

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY.

TERMS: By Mail, \$2 per annum, in advance.
When left by Carrier, \$2.50

J. S. DWIGHT, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

EDWARD L. BALCH, PRINTER.

OFFICE, No. 21 School Street, Boston.

SUBSCRIPTIONS RECEIVED

At the OFFICE OF PUBLICATION, No. 21 School St. Boston.
By NATHAN RICHARDSON, 282 Washington St. "
" GEORGE P. REED & CO., 13 Tremont Row, "
" A. M. LELAND, Providence, R. I. "
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Chat with Rossini.

By FERDINAND HILLER.

Translated for this Journal from the *Zeitung* of Cologne.

IV.

ROSSINI sang the beginning of a string Quartet by HAYDN. Could a piece be commenced in a more noble manner? he exclaimed. What an *abandon*, what a grace is in this *motive*!

—I do not believe that Haydn in the string Quartet, said I, has ever been surpassed by any composer, not even by BEETHOVEN.

—Charming works indeed are these Quartets, said the maestro with warmth; what a lovely interchange of the four instruments! and what a subtlety in the modulations! All composers of consequence have fine modulations; but those of Haydn always had for me a quite peculiar, individual charm.

—Have you already had occasion to hear these compositions in Italy? I asked.

—Already in Bologna, in my boyhood. I had got together a quartet of strings, in which I played the viola as well as might be. The first violinist had at first only a few of Haydn's works, but I kept urging him to procure more and more, so that I gradually became familiar with a considerable number of them. At that time I studied Haydn with peculiar partiality. You should have been present when I directed "The Creation" at the Lyceum in Bologna! In truth I suffered no slip in any performer to escape me, for I knew every note by heart. "The Seasons," too, I studied, as after leaving the Lyceum I was made director of the Philharmonic concerts.

—"The Seasons" are perhaps still richer in invention, than "The Creation," said I. Certainly the text afforded more room for variety.

—It may be so, replied Rossini; but there is a

certain higher feeling pervading "The Creation," which makes me prefer it. How splendid is this Aria—, and the chorus in B flat,—and the air of Raphael (the maestro sang the beginnings of all these pieces),—and what a wonderful instrumental composition is the Chaos! But nothing cleaves to one more deeply, than the impressions of first youth. I knew in Vienna an Italian, CALPANI, who, having resided there for many years, had been a great deal in the society of Haydn. He was never weary of telling me about the kind-heartedness, the gentleness and modesty of the old master.

—He showed the greatest justice towards others, said I, and declared to MOZART's father, in the simplest words, that he esteemed his son the greatest of all composers.

—He certainly expressed his real thought, and he was right, exclaimed the maestro.

—I have never seen one of his operas, I continued; but, strangely enough, they do not seem to have been of much account.

—I have read them through in Vienna, at the house of a passionate admirer of Haydn, who boasted that he possessed all his compositions, said Rossini. They are insignificant works, in which scarcely a trait here and there reminds you of the great composer. I believe he composed them all at an early age, merely to oblige prince ESTERHAZY and his singers. Do you know his cantata, *Ariadne*?

—I played it through once, a long time ago, but I have never heard it, and there is nothing remaining of it in my memory, said I, somewhat ashamed.

—Apart from the oratorios, it is to me the dearest vocal composition of Haydn—the Adagio especially is very fine, said Rossini, and he began to sing a considerable piece of it.

—You really know our German masters better than I do, I exclaimed, and I begin to grow jealous of you. Are you as well acquainted, then, with your Italian predecessors?

—I have read through a great deal.

—Have you heard many of PAISIELLO's operas performed?

—In my young days they had nearly vanished from the Italian stage. GENERALI, FIORAVANTI, PAER, but above all SIMON MAIR were the order of the day.

—Do you like Paisiello?

—His music passes agreeably by the ear, but neither as regards harmony nor melody is it distinguished, and it has never interested me particularly. His principle was, with a small motive to compose a whole piece—which gave little life and particularly little dramatic expression.

—Did you know him personally?

—I saw him in Naples, after his return from Paris, where he acquired some fortune. NAPOLEON liked to hear his music, and Paisiello boasted of it in a rather naïve manner, telling everybody that the great Emperor was peculiarly fond of his music, because it did not hinder him from thinking about other things. A singular praise! Nevertheless his *soft* music was universally preferred in its day—every epoch has its own peculiar taste.

—Was Paisiello an interesting man?

—His exterior was fine, powerful, almost imposing; but he was shockingly uncultivated and immeasurably insignificant. You should have read a letter of his! I speak not of the handwriting, nor of the orthography—I can pardon that; but the inaptitude of the expression, the flatness of the thoughts, are beyond all conception! A very different man was CIMAROSA,—a fine, cultivated mind. Do you know anything of his? —The *Matrimonio Segreto*, of course, I answered; also I have read through "The Horatii."

—In the latter there is not so much. On the other hand there is an Opera Buffa by him, *Le trame deluse*, which is altogether excellent.

—Better than the *Matrimonio Segreto*?

—Incomparably more important. There is a *Finale* in the second act (it is almost too great for a last *Finale*), which is a genuine masterpiece. Unfortunately the libretto is miserably bad. I also remember an aria in his oratorio, *Isaaco*, in which there is one passage especially, which is very striking and dramatic as to harmony. A pure inspiration, for in general, as you know, he was no great harmonist.

—It is difficult with us to obtain the works of these composers, said I. One must go in person and spend a year in Italy for this purpose. The library of the Conservatoire of Naples especially, must contain extraordinary treasures.

—There is an astonishing quantity stored away there, said Rossini; the collective manuscripts of Cimarosa, too, must be to be found there. Formerly they were in the possession of the Cardinal Gonsalvi, who cherished a passionate regard for Cimarosa. One could not give him a greater pleasure, than by singing him some pieces of his favorite. I did this often during my stay in Rome, and he was truly grateful to me for it.

—And your own manuscripts, maestro,—I fancy, you do not possess many of them?

—Not a note.

—But where in the world are they?

—Heaven knows. I had the right, at the end of a year, to demand them back from the copyist, but I never made any use of it. Some of them may be in Naples; some are in Paris; the fate of the rest is unknown to me.

—Have you not at least preserved your studies with Padre MATTEI?

—I had them for many years—but one day when I came back to Bologna, they were no more to be found. Whether they were thrown away, or stolen, or sold for waste paper, I know not.

—You are not perhaps in possession of the engraved scores and piano arrangements of your operas, *maestro*! said I, laughing.

—What should I want of them? It is years since any music has been made in my house. Shall I study them?

—And the opera, *Ermione*, which one of your biographers says that you have kept mysteriously, to leave it to posterity—how about that?

—It lies with the others.

—You told me formerly about that opera, that you had made it too dramatic, and—it had fallen through.

—And very justly, said Rossini, in a cheerful tone, it was very tedious.

—Does it contain no airs, then, no finales, nothing of all that, with which you always knew how to intoxicate the people?

—You are very kind, said the *maestro*, ironically, but there was really nothing in it,—all recitative-like and declamatory. I wrote one Cavatina in it for DAVID; the poor fellow had to have something to sing. This has had some circulation, and probably you know it. It begins.... (and the *maestro* sang the first motive).

—I have often heard it, without knowing that it was taken from that opera. But here comes General MONET—let us ask him for some explanations in relation to the last telegraphic despatches (from Sebastopol).

—That we will. Curious music, they perform there—very strongly instrumented! But when shall we get to the Finale?

V.

Our esteemed master NEUKOMM was also passing a couple of weeks in September with his friends in Trouville. He wished to see Rossini, and as he had not met him for twenty-five years, I called with him. Rossini at once recollected how at that time, at the Duchess of Vaudemont's, Neukomm had given him some hints about the construction of an Aeolian harp, of which he had several made at the country seat of his friend Aguado. The two distinguished men conversed together in the most cordial manner. I had told Rossini much about Neukomm, especially of his incredible, and really wonderful activity, which kept him prisoner at his writing desk from the earliest hour of morning. Thereupon Rossini began.

You are still ever unwearied in producing, Signor Chevalier, he said to him.

—When it comes to such a pass that I can work no more, replied Neukomm, they may lay me between six boards and nail them up; I shall not care to know any more of life.

—You have the passion of industry, I always have had that of laziness! exclaimed Rossini.

—The forty operas of your composing are not exactly a proof of that, replied Neukomm.

—That was long ago. But one should bring into the world with him whip-cords instead of nerves, said the *maestro* somewhat seriously. But let us leave that. You have travelled extensively, and indeed have been for several years in Brazil?

—I had accepted the place of court-kapellmeister

with Don PEDRO, who was a very music-loving gentleman. He even busied himself with composition.

—I can tell you something about that, said Rossini. He had been so gracious, as to send me an order. Afterwards when he came, somewhat against his will, to Paris, I thanked him for it, and, as I had heard about his compositions, I asked him to allow something of them to be performed at the Italian Opera, to which he willingly consented.

—He would even have directed, had you wished it, interrupted Neukomm.

—Impossible! He sent me a Cavatina, which I had copied out, with the addition of a few trombone blasts; it was well performed in a concert at the Italian Opera, received quite a respectable applause, and Don Pedro in his box appeared to feel great pleasure in it,—at all events he thanked me in the warmest manner.—

I must insert here by way of completion of this little anecdote, that I spoke of it in the saloon of the Countess B. I remember that evening perfectly well, said the Countess, for Don Pedro came after the concert into the Tuileries and looked perfectly transfigured. He declared that he had never in all his life experienced so great a pleasure. These enthusiastic outbursts on the part of a man, who had just lost an empire, appeared strange enough.

—Perhaps it is not always the weightiest things, that give us the greatest pleasure, I took the liberty of remarking.

—Another forenoon I was with Rossini at Neukomm's. The latter had in his chamber a little *Orgue expressif*, which contained many improvements and conveniences suggested by himself. With the youthful vivacity, peculiar to him, Neukomm explained all the details and begged Rossini to try the instrument. He sat down and played, as well as he could, a couple of dozen bars of the "Chaos" from the "Creation," which was naturally very gratifying to the old scholar of Haydn. Then I played with Neukomm some movements from "The Seven Words," which he had arranged for piano and *orgue expressif*, which led to mention of the fact that Neukomm had performed this labor for a great number of the greatest works of Handel, Haydn and Mozart, of course simply for his own satisfaction and the pleasure of a few friends.

Afterwards as we walked away together, Rossini said, evidently moved: Such industry, such genuine simple love of Art are in the highest degree honorable. No money interest comes in play there, no self-love, or at least so small a dose of it, that it is not worth speaking of. I have great respect for it!

[To be continued.]

Life of John Sebastian Bach;

WITH A CRITICAL VIEW OF HIS COMPOSITIONS, BY J. N. FORKEL.

(Continued from p. 75.)

CHAPTER VIII.

In order to produce works of such excellence as Bach has left behind him, in various branches, it is clear, he must have composed a great deal. For the greatest genius in the world, unless he be daily exercised in his art, can never produce works which a competent judge could pronounce to be perfect and complete throughout. Constant practice can alone attain to true greatness. But it would be highly erroneous to pronounce all the productions of this unwearied practice to be mas-

ter-pieces, because master-pieces are the final result of it. And this is not unexemplified in Bach's works. Though there are to be found, even in his earliest attempts, unquestionable evidences of great genius, yet they, at the same time, exhibit so much that is useless, weak, eccentric and tasteless, that they are unworthy of being preserved, at least, for the public at large, and are chiefly interesting for the connoisseur, as serving to trace the course which such a genius has pursued, from the beginning of his career. To assist us to distinguish these juvenile efforts or exercises, from his real master-pieces, Bach has furnished us with two criterions, and critical comparison may afford a third. He was above forty years of age when his first work appeared; and what he himself, at that mature age, deemed worthy of publication, we may, surely, pronounce to be good. A great portion of his compositions, however, were merely circulated in manuscript; and to judge of these, we must resort partly to critical comparison, and partly, also, to those sure tests, which Bach himself has given us. Bach, like all other true geniuses, never entirely laid aside the file of the critic, but improved any of his early works that were capable of improvement, and even extended his care to some of those works already engraved; and hence arose the differences in the old and new copies; and he himself clearly conceived the pieces so altered to be worthy of improvement, and capable of being made really fine works of Art. Under this head, you may reckon most of what he composed before the year 1725, as will be presently more particularly mentioned in the following list. There are a great many later compositions which, for reasons easily to be understood, are, likewise, known only in manuscript, but which bear, too decidedly, the stamp of perfection, to allow us to doubt whether we shall class them among the essays, or among the *chef d'œuvres* of this accomplished master.

Bach's engraved works, are as follows:—1. *Clavierübung*, or Exercises for the Clavichord; consisting of preludes, allemandes, courants, sarabands, jigs, minuets, &c., for the amusement of amateurs. Opus 1, published by "the author, 1731." This work consists of six suites; the first appeared in 1726, and the others followed in succession, till in 1731 they were all engraved together. This work made in its day, a great noise in the musical world: such superior compositions for the harpsichord had never been before heard. He, who learnt to play some of these pieces well, could make his fortune by them, in the musical world; and even now a young artist might gain much knowledge from them; they are so brilliant, tuneful and expressive, and ever new. In the new edition, they bear the title of "*Exercices pour le Clavecin*." 2.—"*Clavierübung*, or Exercises for the Clavichord; consisting of a concerto in the Italian style, and an overture in the French style, for a harpsichord, with two rows of keys. Second part, published by Christopher Weigel, in Nuremberg." 3.—"*Clavierübung*, or Exercises for the Clavichord; consisting of various preludes to the Catechismal, &c., and other hymns for the Organ, composed for the amusement of amateurs, and especially for judges of such works. Third part, published by the author." Besides the preludes and fugues for the organ, which are all master-pieces, this collection also contains four duets for the clavichord, which are models for duets, and admit no third part. 4. "*Sechs Choräle*, or Six Choral Melodies, of various kinds, to be played on one organ, having two rows of keys, and a pedal. Zella on Thuringia Forest. Published by J. G. Schuber." They are full of solemn and religious expression. In some of them we may see how Bach's method of managing stops differed from the usual one. For instance in the second chorale, "*Wo soll ich fliehen hin*," &c., he gives to the first 8, to the second 16, and to the pedal 4 feet. The pedal is made to perform the *cantum firmum*. 5. "*Clavierübung*, or Exercises for the Clavichord; consisting of an air, with several variations for the harpsichord, with two rows of keys. Published by Balthaer Schmid, at Nuremberg." This excellent work has thirty variations, in which there are canons in all inter-

vals, and movements from the unison to the ninth, with the most easy and flowing melody. It has, also, a four-part fugue, and besides, several very brilliant variations for two clavichords; and to conclude, a quodlibet, as it is called, which might alone immortalize its author, though it is here far from holding the first place. For this model, according to which all variations should be made, though for obvious reasons, not one of the kind has ever been attempted,—for this model we have to thank Count Kaiserling, formerly Russian Ambassador at the court of the Elector of Saxony, who often resided at Leipzig, and brought with him Goldberg, of whom whom we have before spoken, in order to have him taught by Bach. The Count was a great invalid, and passed many sleepless nights; and, on these occasions, Goldberg, who lived in the same house with him, used to remain during the night, in an adjoining room, to play to him while he remained awake. The Count once expressed a wish to Bach to have some harpsichord pieces for Goldberg, of a soothing yet cheerful character, which should afford him some amusement during those sleepless hours. Bach thought that this desire would be best gratified by variations, which he had hitherto looked upon as an ungrateful labor, on account of the continual sameness of their fundamental harmonies. But these variations became in his hands, models of Art, as, indeed, were all his compositions of this period. They are the only model of the kind he has left us. The Count always called them *his* variations, and was never tired of hearing them; and long afterwards, when ever he lay awake at night, he used to say: "Do, dear Goldberg, play me one of my variations."

Bach was, perhaps, better rewarded for this than for any other of his works. The Count presented him with a golden goblet, containing a hundred louis d'ors; but had it been a thousand, it would not have been overrated as a work of Art. It should be observed, that in the engraved copies of these variations, there are some important errata which the composer has carefully corrected in his own copy.

[To be continued.]

Diary Abroad.—No. 29.

BERLIN, NOV. 11.—LENZ'S new book! Part First, "Life of the Master, BEETHOVEN," 8vo. pp. 293.

Page 5th. "Beethoven was hardly seven years old when his father concluded to educate him as a musician. The old custom in common life, of bringing up the son in the footsteps of his father, so often a cause of misery, was to the advantage of Beethoven; him it raised aloft! The future creator of the *Sinfonia Eroica* withdrew into the little room in the attic of the modest gabled house in the Bonngasse, which resembles the birth house of MOZART in Salzburg, as the overture to the *Zauberflöte* does that to *Coriolan*. Here, high up under the roof, the boy practiced the violin entrusted to him among the heaps of dusty books and his father's piles of music, yellow with age, which contained more dust than soul. His only society was a huge spider, so musically inclined, that it instantly left its corner, so oft as it heard this boy, the elect to so grand a destiny, and let itself down upon the instrument of the roof-virtuoso. He however had just so little fear of the ugly creature, as he had thirty years after in swearing solemnly eternal hostility in his violin concerto in D, (see op. 61 in Catalogue*) to the prevailing empty concerto style. On the other hand the child learned to love the spider, but this was not to last. The mother of the boy, not knowing the instinct and its love for her son, destroyed it in the absence of the roof-virtuoso. So ended his first love. Whether the insect was musical, or more probably unmusical, is not decided by Quatremere Disjoul, who relates the fact in his *Araneologie*."

An interesting and beautiful story, is it not? Mr. Lenz however has not given it exactly as it was communicated to the *Leipziger Musik Zeitung* in 1800, [vol. II., p. 653] by D. Hager, of Altenburg. This gentleman expressly states that he copies from Disjoul, and relates the death of the spider thus: "One day his aunt [not the spider's] who filled the place of mother to the

boy, entered the room and brought some one to witness the talents of the young violinist. He played, the spider stayed not away, but finally mounted to his arm. The aunt suddenly sprang forward, knocked the insect to the floor with her slipper, and trod upon it instantly. Horrified sank the young man to the floor in a fainting fit."

Note by D. Hager:

("The young artist *then*, is the so celebrated Beethoven *now*. Whoever wishes can learn the truth of this circumstance as often as he will by applying to his former teacher, citizen Le Mierre, at Paris.")

One or two points in Lenz's relation sound a little as though he had gone to FETIS or the ——— for his facts. They however are easily corrected.

1. Beethoven's father decided to educate him to music before he was *four* years old. Wegeler and Mayor Windeck of Bonn, in the controversy about B.'s birth house, testify to having seen the child at that early age standing in tears at the pianoforte, whither he was forced by his father.

2. At seven years of age the Beethoven family no longer lived in the Bonngasse; they left it soon after the birth of the Ludwig.

3. There is no evidence that the father, Johann van Beethoven, ever composed a note of music, and much circumstantial evidence that the heaps of dusty books are a Fétis-like ornament to the story.

4. The instrument on which the boy had to practice was the piano forte, and not the violin.

5. It was in a back room of the house in the Rheingasse, where Wegeler saw him at work in tears.

As to the anecdote of the spider, Lenz acknowledges that Beethoven in after years denied it. SCHINDLER says so expressly; but believes it nevertheless, on this ground: "Beethoven," says he, "hated everything that reminded one of '*Sensiblerie*,' and just on this account he was able to speak such wisdom in the mysterious language of his music to the finer but *true* feelings of the human heart."

I do not believe it, on these grounds:

1. That B. studied the pianoforte so as in his eleventh year to play BACH, and publish sonatas—how should he study the violin?

2. In his *eighteenth* year he plays *viola* in the Elector's orchestra, which does not look like being a violinist of note.

3. In the story told in the *Zeitung*, an aunt is the actor, who supplies the place of a mother. Now there is no other account whatsoever that Beethoven's father or mother had a sister, and his mother did not die until he was nearly eighteen years old.

4. I have done what Mr. Lenz should have done, hunted up Disjoul's book at an antiquarian bookseller's, and not taken extracts on trust. I find my side of the question strengthened by the account as it stands there.

This "*Araneologie*" is a thin octavo of 117 pages, in German, translated from the second edition of the French work and published at Frankfurt am Main in 1795. The author during an imprisonment of "eighty-nine months" made the habits of spiders his study, and especially observed them in their capacity of natural barometers. The third chapter is upon "Spiders in their relation to men," and closes with two anecdotes, one of which is the one in question. Herr Hager has not given the close of the story quite in the author's words. Here it is: "The spider did not omit to appear immediately after the first stroke of the bow, and, according to its custom, to draw nearer and nearer, and finally to rest itself upon the hand of the young artist. But for the good aunt to snatch off her slipper, hastily to brush the hateful spider from its favorite position to the floor, and, pitiless, to crush it—was all one. Oh, reader! that I could pass over the close of the story in silence! The poor boy complained not, he wept not. In a swoon he sinks to the floor. He is conveyed to his bed; he is quite insensible. For more than three months he fluctuates between life and death, and when at last he once more can speak, he calls continually, and, alas! in vain for his dear, dear spider."

Touching, is it not?

Now I cannot believe Wegeler would have passed this over in silence, nor that Beethoven would have *lied* about it, if true.

The note in parenthesis, given above, as by D. Hager,

is an incorrect translation of the following note on page 38 of Disjoul's book:

"The then young artist, is now [1798] the first violinist existing [certainly then not Beethoven]; in one word, it is the celebrated BERTHOME. Any one can, as to the truth of the above related circumstance, inquire as often as he will of citizen Le Mierre, his teacher."

But, perhaps Berthome is a misprint for Beethoven. Let us ask Schilling. (See Schilling's Lexicon.)

Berthame, (the first name has never been known) an artist in many respects distinguished and remarkable; a violinist and composer; born at Paris about 1756, already as a boy of eight years he drew the attention of the artists and dilettanti of that city to him by the public performance of difficult violin concertos; a powerful genius developed itself in the fast growing youth, whose spiritual seemed to hurry on in advance of his corporeal nature; still his father, who at the same time was his only teacher, held the reins very tightly; he is said to have accomplished wonders in the paths of the greatest violinists, and yet even the well known anecdote of the spider, which, according to his own account, related to him and not to another young virtuoso of whom the *Leipziger Musik Zeitung* tells it—the spider which is said to have appeared during his playing—could not convince his father of the already achieved unsurpassability [a good German word!], of the expressive and finished style and the deep-grounded musical knowledge of his fourteen-year-old son."

He became the violinist of his day, and died in 1802.

An error is the longest and most manifold lived animal that exists. I think, for the readers of Dwight, one of that cat's lives is at an end; and yet see if in a month from this time the story is not going the rounds on Lenz's authority.

Therefore I do not believe the story of Beethoven and the spider.

Musical Correspondence.

NEW YORK, DEC. 11.—It is really a relief to be able to write that DE LA GRANGE has appeared in a new rôle, *without* making a decided success. Hitherto every fresh appearance has been a new triumph, and the critics had fairly exhausted all the adjectives of praise; but her Lucretia Borgia was far from satisfactory. She was not at home in her rôle; it is said that it is the first time of her singing it, and to-night at AMODIO's benefit all this may be remedied. Of course she is always the finished artist and maintains her rank as the very first singer of the lighter, the LIND and SONTAG school, now living. But it is physically impossible for her to represent the profligate of the Italian librettist. Her personal appearance forbids it, and her voice is not that large organ so indispensable for such rôles as Norma and Lucretia. Here she is as much out of place as was GRISI as Amina or Rosina.

The performance of *I Puritani* on Wednesday night was a most curious affair. DE LA GRANGE was of course faultless, for this is one of her most acceptable rôles; but the new basso, CASPANI, has an organ hardly capable of filling that elegant saloon which the CHICKERINGS of your city have so generously fitted up. Of course we only saw him, and his head dressed *à la malcontent*, with a long, lank figure and face, relieved only by a moustache, which from its size seemed to make up for the hair that was not on his caput, reminded me only of the far-famed Don Quixote de la Mancha. Getting very near the stage I did hear enough to surmise that he might be very acceptable in a drawing room. I hear that he has wisely determined to return to Europe. MORELLI was artistic of course, but he has found out that New Yorkers have an over-weening fondness for noise, and exaggerates a little too much. Then the orchestra, although composed of our very best instrumentists, and without a superior in America, got entirely out once or twice, and MA-RETZEK either could not or would not put them back

*This refers to the Catalogue in Lenz's previous book, "*Beethoven et ses trois styles*."

again. There he sat, flourishing his bâton, indeed, pretty freely, but apparently quite indifferent to the confusion which was evident. I never listened to a worse performance.

I had forgotten to mention BRIGNOLI, and perhaps it is as well as it is, since an apology was made for him and he had reason to labor under some excitement from a duel that did *not* come off during the day. Signor PATAMIA, husband of the very acceptable comprimaria who debuted as Bertha, and an artist whose clever caricatures of some of our opera people have attracted much attention in Goupil's window, had some disagreement with the tenore assoluto, words passed and a challenge ensued; the duel was fixed to come off that Wednesday with small swords, this weapon having been selected as less dangerous and noisy than the pistol. "Sober second thoughts" came in time, however, and the parties concluded to apologize and make up. There are very many versions afloat of this little operatic episode, but it is hardly worth the while to enter more in detail for your readers.

Has it ever struck you how strangely our opera troupe is at present composed? We have one prima donna; fortunately her strength of endurance is sufficient for three; two comprimaries, very good in their way; two seconde donne, whose first appearance here was so long ago that I have forgotten all about it; four tenori, Brignoli a little better than the others; one good buffo; two very acceptable baritoni; three very unacceptable bassi and not one primo basso; and four contralti, one of whom deserves the name; one contralto is considered sufficient for a troupe; Mr. PAINE has four. The consequence is that one of them, VENTALDI, has not yet been heard by our public and is not likely to be in the few nights that remain. I have been somewhat favored, however, as I had the opportunity, seated behind her, of hearing her accompany *sotto voce* the whole of *I Puritani* the other night, but I await a public appearance before forming an opinion as to her merits.

NANTIER-DIDIEE made her appearance in *Trovatore* last night, and gave quite a new idea to the rôle of Azucena; I can understand how VIARDOT GARCIA made such a sensation in it abroad. Didiee is an excellent singer and a true artist, completing the trio of the Academy troupe.

Mr. EISELDE's second Soirée will be given on Saturday night. A quartet by RUBINSTEIN will be the novelty; I am curious to hear NOLL holding the first violin for young Germany. Mr. TIMM will play in SPOHR's second Quintet, and Mme. WALLACE-BOUCHELLE will sing an aria from MOZART and a ballad by Mr. Eisefeld.

MASON and BERGMANN's second Matinée is for Tuesday of next week. BEETHOVEN's 7th Quartet, ROBERT SCHUMANN's Quartet for piano and strings, GOUNOD's meditations on a prelude of BACH, for piano, violin and 'cello, and CHOPIN's A flat Ballade for the programme. MILANO.

PHILADELPHIA, DEC. 9.—The original oratorio of "The Cities of the Plain" was sung last evening for the first time, at Concert Hall, by the Harmonia Sacred Music Society, which has the credit of being the only association in the United States, willing to bring out American compositions of any bulk. Would that the success with which its efforts are crowned, were an incentive to other musical societies to follow its example. It is rare for American composers to obtain a hearing, and every one will acknowledge how much more unusual it is for them to be heard a second time. As far as my knowledge extends, this is an honor that has been attained solely by WILLIAM H. FRY, G. F. BRISTOW, and F. T. S. DARLEY, in his two oratorios of "Belshazzar" and "The Cities of the Plain"; the last named composer has the field of sacred music to himself, and is

the only American who has acquired any notoriety in this elevated range of Art.

The libretto of "The Cities of the Plain" is better than oratorio books usually are, and the author, JOSEPH A. NUNES, Esq., is not ashamed to acknowledge it as his. The latter portion is quite good. The words are printed in a neat pamphlet of sixteen pages or so, with explanatory notes that are great helps to a proper conception of the composer's meaning. I confess that, occasionally, the auditor is called upon to hear what is by no means represented in the organ accompaniment; in an orchestra, perhaps, the effects spoken of might have been found. I cut the story of the oratorio from the bills, as follows:

The Story of the Oratorio is merely founded upon the events recorded in Genesis, Chapter 19; the composer and the author of the libretto having preferred to make a plot calculated to afford a variety of musical situations rather than to follow the text closely. It was therefore deemed best to call it "THE CITIES OF THE PLAIN," instead of Lot, which last would appear to be a more correct title for the Scriptural record, and to make the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah the leading feature, instead of the Patriarch's providential rescue. The argument may be given briefly, thus:—Lot's household are assembled to sing their evening praises to Jehovah, as they close, the Angel of the Lord appears, and is invited into the house by Lot and his two daughters. The heavenly messenger foretells the coming punishment of the sinful cities, and warns the Hebrew Patriarch to flee from the anger of the Lord. The first portion ends with thanks to God for the protection extended over this one just household. The second part shows the Priests of Dagon revelling in the temple of their false deity, one of the daughters of Lot is brought in, having been wandering through the city, and she is commanded to worship the idol; this she refuses to do, and is condemned to perish in flames on the altar. As they drag her to her fate, Lot appears with his other daughter, and interrupts the sacrifice, warning the guilty priests of the impending doom of the Almighty. They do not heed, and will not give up their victim. Lot calls his household to his aid, and compels the heathens to surrender his child, with whom he departs. The priests resume their festivities, but are interrupted by the storm of fire which commences the destruction of the cities. In the midst of their despair, and vain appeals to their false gods, Lot is heard passing the temple on his way from the burning town, solemnly praising Jehovah. The temple is destroyed, and the Oratorio ends with a simple choral.

This choral runs through the entire work, and,—the notes say, is the type of Lot, in the same way that a certain peculiar passage of some four bars is always heard before the Angel's voice,—an odd method of creating a "unity." The choral is treated in a variety of ways, and in counterpoint with several dissimilar subjects, quite ingeniously, and in some instances with considerable effect. Another peculiarity of the entire work is the difference preserved in the style of the heathen and Hebrew music, the former being generally minor, the latter major.

I cannot pretend to criticize an important composition as this really is, after a single hearing, and without ever having seen a single bar of the score; I can only give my impressions of it as in comparison with "Belshazzar," as an original work, and in regard to its suitability for an oratorio, after which, if I have space, I will tell you what I consider the best parts of it.

First. Is it, or not, an improvement upon the composer's previous cantata or oratorio, of "Belshazzar?" Yes, and No. Let me explain this vague answer. "Belshazzar" had the faults of a first effort, crude treatment of ideas that were too decidedly French and Italian to be purely original; in "The Cities of the Plain" we find well marked phrases clearly handled, and judiciously treated. It bears the marks of better directed study, more care, and far more acquaintance with the art of composition. At the same time it has not the number of decided melodies that "Belshazzar" had; I grant they are more flowing and easier perhaps, of execution, but they have not, generally speaking, the ear-catching properties of the former production. The concerted music is much better in "The Cities of the Plain;" there are several pieces of part-writing far superior to any in "Belshazzar," but none of them are as

striking as the Terzette: 'Tis in vain, which often occurs to my memory even at the present time, although nearly two years have elapsed since I heard it. There is one great fault in the first part of "The Cities of the Plain," a monotony of time and rhythm, which makes it seem tiresome to me; so you see my answer was correct, for while the new oratorio is better written, it is not so pleasing as the young composer's initial effort.

Second: as an original work. I am not given to admire American attempts in the high range of musical composition; there is always a want of that indescribable spirit which is infused into foreign works by the constant study of the old masters, a study too much neglected here. European composers have better opportunities to perfect themselves in the art than are afforded by our institutions, and, except in instances of remarkable genius, they seem to model their writings upon the style of some acknowledged celebrity, thus giving a distinctive character to their own compositions. In America the young tyros follow everybody's lead, and generally give us a work that is a patchwork of all sorts of styles, without any originality. Mr. Fry, in his opera of "Leonora," is an exception to my remark, as he followed BELLINI with such extreme fidelity, as to produce a copy rather than an imitation. Mr. Bristow's "Rip Van Winkle" is a patchwork, so was Mr. Darley's "Belshazzar" a patchwork of MEYERBEER, AUBER and BELLINI, as was stated at the time in a criticism published in the Journal of Music. But let me be candid enough to state that Mr. Darley is now forming a style for himself, modelled on Meyerbeer still, but less trammelled by recollections of strains he has heard, and indicating a gradual enlargement from his first standpoint. I am willing to say that "The Cities of the Plain," particularly the second part, is the first American work I have heard that gives any promise of future excellence on the part of the composer.

Third; as regards its suitability for an oratorio. In speaking as I really think in regard to the music in this light, I must allow that it is not what it should be. There are none of those solemn choruses that distinguish the oratorio from every other class of composition, none of the descriptive music identified with it, none of the recitatives which are inseparable from the followers of HANDEL and HAYDN. The choruses are all simple, with two exceptions, and not in the least like oratorio choruses; they are pastoral, or light, while the exceptions I have named; one preceding the storm is a concerted operatic finale, and the other a broken up bacchanale, apparently a double chorus between the people of the falling cities, and the priests revelling in the temple. These two compositions are the best in the work, and are very original, but not in oratorio style. The recitatives are very few and short, and always dramatic in construction. The solos may be similarly described. May I not say then that "The Cities of the Plain" is a sacred opera, and not an oratorio? You would say so, friend Dwight, were you to hear it, for all the concerted music smells of scenery and savors of foot-lights: none the worse for that, *as music*.

The pieces I prefer are four in number; the two trios, one in each part, the bacchic song of the High Priest, and the first of the two choruses I have called exceptions. The first trio is where Lot and his daughter invite the Angel to enter their dwelling, and the melody and movement of the parts expresses an invitation as plainly as any music can. I am not, generally, a believer in imitative music, but the trio is so appropriate to the words that I cannot avoid mentioning it. The second trio is more operatic, and is sung by two priests of Dagon and the daughter of Lot in the temple; it is somewhat complicated in treatment, but the phrasing is even, good and well suited for vocal performance. The chorus I speak of, is sung by the household of Lot breaking

into the temple and demanding the release of the captive maid. It commences energetically in fugue style, but turns into an *Allo. Presto*, of considerable dramatic power, ending with a novel crescendo and rapid descending scale, with all the parts in unison. The High Priest's drinking song follows this, and commanded an encore, quite a breach of decorum on the part of the audience, though I was not surprised at the wish to hear it over, as it is one of the most inspiring bacchanals I can recall to memory. I do not mean to say that these four fragments are the only good things in the oratorio; there is a drinking chorus opening the second part, (encored) that is quite characteristic, and very light; a soprano cavatina for the captive daughter, pathetic and Meyerbeer-ish; a quintet and plenty more, all worthy of notice.

As my duty, as critic, is to find all the fault I can, let me say, on the whole, the oratorio is long-winded—almost two hours long,—and that the Directors made a mistake in having a second part to the concert. Finally, let me say that the performance was in many parts most excellent; the chorus numbered larger than I ever heard in the Harmonia concerts, was better drilled, and entered most creditably into the ideas of the composer. The words could be heard distinctly despite the large body of performers. The contralto part in the chorus sounded weak in comparison with the overpowering sopranos. The solo singers acquitted themselves well, excepting in one or two places. The soprano and baritone were the best; the bass rather too powerful a voice for the others in the concerted pieces. Mr. Bishop sang tastefully but nervously, and was not always up to the pitch of the organ. The room was full in every part, and that the oratorio met with complete success cannot be denied by any critic. To fulfil the requirements of my *nom de plume*, I am compelled to say that the production of "The Cities of the Plain" was creditable to all concerned, the chorus, solo singers, the organist, the society and more than all to the young composer; to encourage him to pursue his studies, and to write more is the duty of every honest musician and critic. VERITAS.

BERLIN, NOV. 12.—The next evening, after the glorious concert described in my last, my fortunate star led me into a select company, where CLARA SCHUMANN and JOACHIM kindly played a couple of pianoforte and violin sonatas by MOZART, and one by BEETHOVEN. I don't understand and follow Mozart's purely instrumental music as I do Beethoven's—it appears to me after another manner. With his vocal music the case is different. His *Requiem* is almost painful to me, so overpowering are the emotions it awakens; his masses carry me into unknown regions—into the realm of the lofty and magnificent poetry of the Psalms, of Isaiah and Job; his operas are the acme of all that is perfect in the musical expression of mere human emotion; but his symphonies, his quartets and his pianoforte music, set my thoughts rambling into every unknown sphere, and so I found it to be the case in these duet sonatas. They were new to me, and have left a strange impression. Whether that be not the object of them? How they were played—that is not to be spoken.

There is a society of women here, subordinate to the Gustav Adolph Verein—an association for the purpose of assisting feeble German Protestant churches—which arranges for a series of concerts annually, at which distinguished performers kindly assist. One of these concerts took place this evening, and the virtuosos were ALFRED JAEHL and JOACHIM. I have been hearing little else than sober earnest music latterly; within a few days past MOZART's "Idomeneus," GLUCK's "Orpheus and Eurydice," MENDELSSOHN's "Elijah," various symphonies, the grand overtures of Gluck, Beethoven, and music of

that quality. It was therefore with a real feeling of delight that a concert of lighter music came in my way, and this was that of this evening. Besides the performances of the two virtuosos, solo, we had an air from the "Prophète," a vocal trio by CURSCHMANN, an air from Mozart's "Titus" for contralto with bassethorn *obligato*; a trio for female voices from "Tell," and at the beginning, HUMMEL's glorious "Septuor." I was badly seated for this.

The pianoforte part in this was given by Jaell, with his so well known ease and beauty. The other performance by him was of two salon pieces, melodies surrounded with a halo of pearly runs, trills, and beautiful ornaments of all kinds; a kind of music of which I have heard no example from any other artist in Germany, though so popular with us. He pleased, for he was called out again, and gave a third in similar style.

But the charm of the evening to me was Joachim. His first performance was SPOHR's Concerto in vocal form in which the violin sang the music in the most delicious style, and the concert closed with a prelude by BACH and a caprice by PAGANINI. But I have exhausted myself—I do not know what further to say. These were difficulties which I did not, with Dr JOHNSON, wish impossible. But,—what I did not expect—each difficulty had a true musical value, and one saw that Paganini was not merely the great virtuoso, he was also the great artist.

As I came out, all exalted and treading upon air, I met Joachim. "How can you play so?" He smiled and instead of replying directly to my question, simply remarked, in relation to the last pieces, which had been announced on the programme as two caprices by Paganini, that he was curious to see if the critics would find out the difference.

A few days before, I had met him with a mutual friend, where the conversation turned upon EMERSON and SHAKESPEARE; Emerson's essay on the great poet in the "Representative Men," forming our text, a part of which we had been reading. I found Joachim a good English scholar, and his appreciation both of Shakespeare and Emerson shows him to be more than a mere virtuoso on the violin. Almost the last thing he said to me was: "To-day I have bought all Emerson's works." I think this fact will not injure him in the esteem of Bostonians.

Two works by him (op. 10 and 11, I think they number) have just appeared; both are for viola and pianoforte. One of these operas contains three duets, "Hebrew melodies," inspired by three of BYRON's poems of the same title. A friend of mine has also a pianoforte and violin sonata by him,—but I cannot learn of any case in which he has played his own music in public! And this great artist is not yet twenty-five years of age. A. W. T.

Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, DEC. 15, 1855.

CONCERTS.

SECOND ORCHESTRAL CONCERT.—Another beautiful Saturday evening, and another fine feast of the best of music. The audience was considerably larger than before, and yet not large enough to fill up the measure of a triumph in that spacious Music Hall. The mass of listeners seemed even more delighted than the first time. The programme proved a little too long, longer than the makers thereof had anticipated;—yet it contained nothing which a true music-lover could regret, or count it other than pure gain to have an opportunity to hear. The chances of hearing the best things come so seldom and so irregularly,

that one must sometimes take more than enough at one time to make sure of half enough in the long run. He who would master a science, or a period of history, must he not sometimes read more at a sitting than is good for eyes or brain? Nay, do not even your merest intellectual pleasure-seekers, your light novel-readers, do the same?

The best played piece of the evening was the Symphony, MENDELSSOHN's No. 3, in A minor. Indeed we have scarcely ever listened to a symphony so well performed in Boston—never by so large an orchestra. All was clear and well fused and subdued; the *tempi* just right; good light and shade; and the composer saw to it that there should be no over-braying of brass here, the score containing no trombone parts. Still ROBERT SCHUMANN says: "Above all it requires gentle blowers." We congratulate Mr. Conductor ZERRAHN on such fruits from a few but thorough drills. This symphony is commonly supposed to have owed its poetic motive to the author's recollections of a visit to Scotland. Yet in the earlier notices of the work, when it first appeared, in Germany and England, about the year 1842 or 1843, (it is dedicated to Queen Victoria,) we find no sort of recognition of these Scotch allusions. On the contrary, Schumann, writing about it in 1843, seems to confound it with the "Italian Symphony" (commonly called No. 4, but really No. 2.) and to feel an Italian atmosphere in it, intimating at the same time that it was commenced in Italy at a much earlier date. How the Scottish origin has at length obtained currency we do not know; but the whole work breathes a northern rather than a southern spirit; in its wild, tender, melancholy melody and coloring, its romantic, breezy, sea-shore character, it is more in affinity with his *Hebriden* overture, than with almost any of his works. In that intricate, sun-sparkling, dimpled laughter of the Scherzo, too, there seems to be a pointed allusion, at once fond and playful, to a characteristic of Scotch melody, in that emphatic mocking of the cadence of a minor third. There is an old ballad, people's song-like tone pervading the whole work, as it does many of the "Songs without Words." A great peculiarity in its structure is that the leading themes of all four movements are very kindred to each other; the melody moves almost always in the same steps, with a little rhythmical variation; and yet it is not monotonous repetition, but vital, organic, self-unfolding unity. Mendelssohn gives directions in the score to have the several movements follow upon one another without pause, so that you dream through one delicious maze of melody and harmonies from beginning to end.

The first movement is on the whole the richest and most satisfying. How deep and tender the feeling of that opening Andante con Moto, in 3-4 time; and how charmingly the kindred Allegro melody, in 6-8, melts from it and runs away so smoothly and so rapidly, most of the way in octaves between first violins and low tones of the clarinet; how it winds in and out among different instruments, now quiet and individual, now borne along upon the swelling, roaring tide of the whole orchestra; how it keeps its sweet sad mood, relieved only by one little bit of the sunshiny major, all the rest being minor; how fondly it repeats and echoes its own graceful turns, and makes itself remote or present! Then, after the repeat, what wild, strange, sea-shore modulations, the cool, mysterious thrill of ocean and the infinite! Then,

when again the violins and clarinet resume the theme, how infinitely expressive is that sympathetic accompanying melody of the violoncello! and when again those shuddering modulations occur, how the excitement rises to a furious climax and all the strings rush up and down the chromatic scale with a tremendous vehemence; and it all subsides away again, till only flutes and reeds are left streaming in the air, sliding leisurely down tone by tone, and leading back into the Andante, which closes the whole as it commenced it! Nothing could be more beautiful, more unique in conception, and carried out with a more perfect grace and harmony of detail. Yet how different from the same movement of the symphony played last time, the seventh of Beethoven! How much less of strength and grandeur and of that Promethean fire that could defy the gods!

In the Scherzo how vividly the laughing theme leaps out from now one and now another voice; the instruments seem to speak (as Schumann says) like men. And there is a bustling, huddling gleesomeness in the accompaniments, like the little waves that crowd up round the spot where the fountain's column falls. In a hushed *staccato* the strings whisper another motive, which is taken up by all and developed, with fragments of the laughing theme, whose Scotch cadence is mockingly echoed, as we have said; and it floats sportively away into the distance, in the violins, against a skyey background of oböe and horn tones, the soul charmed away with it in pleased forgetfulness, when with a sudden revulsion of consciousness you are in the minor chord of D, (like a great sob, escaping you involuntarily,) leading with solemn, stately measure and a sound of warning into the Adagio in A, 2-4, a most lovely, deep and tender movement, in which the orchestra seems to sing as it were a Psalm of Life. There is something mysterious and ominous in the march-like harmony of low reed tones and horns by which this melodious flow is interrupted; but all the orchestra falls cheerfully and grandly into the movement, as if accepting the call of destiny not to linger in the sweet, sad dreams of sentiment. But the sweet Psalm triumphs, and its tune is exquisitely varied and embellished with each fond renewal. Upon this bursts, like a flash of sunshine over the sombre water, the *Allegro vivacissimo*, a most dashing, brilliant theme, pausing anon to let a more pensive melody of reeds be heard; but with rough, impatient vehemence the basses break off the episode, and the bacchic frenzy of the movement storms itself away again, till its force is spent, and the quiet, naïve little reed theme gets another chance, and runs fondling and chatting along in duet between bassoon and oböe, and the strain sinks to sleep as in the "Midsummer Night's Dream" overture. There is a short finale, in A major, in kindred rhythm and melody with the first *Allegro*, but with a bold and somewhat swaggering pomp of movement, as if all were breaking up and marching off home from a glorious festival. But how is it possible to recall these things in words! Again, let us thank Mr. Zerrahn and his orchestra for rendering it so clear.

The vocal piece, which followed, was hardly of the taking and effective kind for a promiscuous audience. Its only fault was that it was perhaps too good. We mean the aria: *O cara immagine*, from the *Zauberflöte*, one of the gems, pure inspirations, which MOZART introduced occasionally,

as if in sign that it was really he, into that strange melodramatic medley which he wrote to order, according to the clap-trap suggestions of his friend, the Vienna manager, whom he saved from ruin by it. It is not an *Air*, to be sure, after the popular pattern, but a series of exquisite melodic fragments, or little ejaculations and heart-gushes of melody, with answering phrases in the orchestral. But it is so supremely beautiful and full of soul and of ideal passion, and relieved and completed by such euphonious, mellow instrumentation, that, with Mr. ARTHURSON's chaste and expressive singing, we still wonder at the apparent coolness with which it was received.

The overture to *Leonora*, in C, the third of the four which BEETHOVEN wrote for his one great opera, and in which he worked out to their completest expression the ideas which haunted and inspired him to experiment so far, until he threw all aside in favor of a wholly different and more popular kind of overture in E, is universally regarded among musical men abroad as the greatest of Beethoven's overtures—why not the grandest of all overtures? Nothing could contrast the peculiar genius of Mendelssohn and Beethoven more strikingly than that Symphony and this Overture. The first how exquisitely finished in every detail! how completely and fully every thought in it is stated! In the latter what a simplicity of means, with what a wonderful effect! How sketchy and fragmentary and full of hints and brief suggestions and abrupt changes, it appears at first to one who only listens with the outward ear! But what a unity of deepest sentiment burns throughout the whole! What intense and concentrated passion! Was ever instrumental music so dramatic? What a sense of utter, weary loneliness, as of an imprisoned soul, in those slowly sinking first notes, and that sighing crescendo, like a great ground-swell from the ocean depths of the heart, which follows! How wonderfully suggestive that restless, yearning motive, which stretches itself by successive efforts into the leading theme, the longing for love and liberty! What marvellous presentiment in those wild, sweet out-streamings of the horn tones, and in those expectant, cautious, tip-toe little phrases, (of flute, &c.) so characteristic of this master when he approaches the grand development, and climaxes of his thought! And what climaxes! The greatest that where, when the storm of emotion is at its height, we suddenly hear the distant trumpet announcing deliverance; (the trumpet, unfortunately, shut up too closely in a back room, sounded flat to listeners in the hall.) And then that immense crescendo of the violins before the close;—in no work of musical Art is great expectation more greatly answered from the beginning to the end. The performance was in the main effective, with the exception of that invisible trumpet, and of the want of a much greater mass of strings. We hope we may soon have this overture again, if only for the sure conversion of the skeptical.

A very different overture commenced the second part, and yet a fine one in its way; the overture to "Tell," too well known to need many words. The beautiful introduction of violoncellos was very finely played. The noisy finale, however, so brilliantly worked up from a commonplace rub-a-dub subject, was what carried the elapping portion of the house by storm, notwithstanding that it was the one badly played thing of the even-

ing, especially upon the encore, when the voices rushed pell-mell and the drum was pounded as if it would go through the floor. Probably the wag ROSSINI laughed when he wrote that finale as a "sop to Cerberus," and would have laughed all the more, to have heard it so applauded and so played. One complains that the "German Orchestra" could not treat this music with respect enough. Probably with quite as much respect as the composer; while "William Tell," in the main noble music, and by far Rossini's greatest, is more German than Italian, and more loved and played and sung by Germans.

The Scena from the second act of "Tell," which followed, proved too long. The Romanza: *Sombre Foret*, was sung by Mrs. J. H. LONG, even more charmingly than at the first concert; her sustained and vanishing high notes and the finishing cadenza were beautiful. The dialogue recitative with Mr. ARTHURSON was much too long, followed as it was by a very long duet, consisting of three several movements or melodies. For this duet, with its strongly accented high tones, and very full orchestral accompaniment, Mr. Arthurson's tenor was not robust enough; but it sounded very sweetly (when not drowned by the instruments), especially in the middle or Andante portion, where the two voices are entwined in a most exquisite melody. The last, that patriotic strain, was taken quite too slow. Otherwise the duet was well sung on both parts; but the orchestra was much too loud and rough, and must learn to subordinate its strength more to the voice part in accompanying. *Fortissimo* is but a relative term and must not be literally taken always to mean as loud as possible.

Because the duet was too long, many fancied the last piece, that sparkling, wonderfully fresh and festive and variegated finale to the first act of *Don Juan* to be too long. We are confident no one would have thought so, had it come earlier in the evening. True, it was but an orchestral arrangement, but the voice-parts are represented in the instruments (Leporello by the bassoon, &c.) and all the wealth of ideas and of coloring of that succession of scenes terminating in the ball scene, with the three dance times playing at once, was brought most vividly to mind. It was no "medley," as one critic hinted, no patchwork selection from all parts of the opera, but the entire connected music of the end of the first act.

Beethoven and Mendelssohn, Mozart and Rossini were most characteristically represented in that programme. And that the concert was a fine one, that it produced a deep impression, is proved by the tone of the newspaper criticisms, which are not only admiring and respectful, but candidly and dutifully fault-finding, as all true and high occasions of Art do properly demand of us to be.

MENDELSSOHN CHORAL SOCIETY.—The elements were most inclement Sunday night; yet there was quite a respectable assemblage in the Tremont Temple, to listen to one of the best performances of the "Messiah," (that is, the greater portion of it,) which we ever heard. The choruses were most of them sung with remarkable accuracy and well-blended power; "All we like sheep," and the Hallelujah, especially. Some of them were perhaps taken a little too fast,—which is the fashion of the times, and in this case not so bad a fault as dragging. We should be glad to

hear, too, a more perfect and continuous *crescendo* than we ever yet heard in the "Wonderful" chorus. The superb organ, under the able hands (and feet) of Mr. W. R. BABCOCK, filled out the tide of chorus grandly. Of the orchestra we cannot say much in praise; it was a picked up affair; a second choice of such as another society had left; and Mr. ECKHARDT's restless, anxious, Jullienesque exertion of hands, head and whole body, seemed to have hard work to keep all together. Still it was only in the accompaniment of some solos, that it was positively bad, and we doubt not we shall find great improvement in the repetition of the oratorio, announced for to-morrow night. This is well; so successful a performance ought not to be thrown away upon a stormy night. The hall should be crowded this time.

But the solos! Never have we listened to ADELAIDE PHILLIPPS with such pure satisfaction. Her rich voice, in the first place, told to the greatest advantage; and then she sang those contralto songs in just that simple, large and noble style which they require. It was expressive, it was artistic, it was religious; better than we have ever heard here before, unless perhaps by Miss LEHMANN. This is especially true of *He was despised*, and still more especially of the last part of that. Mrs. J. H. LONG, too, for one not greatly experienced in this music, sang finely the soprano solos. We have seldom heard anything more satisfactory than her clear, ringing voice in *There were shepherds*. If she continues to study this great music, and to let its spirit inform both mind and voice, she will be truly a great gain to our oratorios. Mr. ARTHURSON sang only *Comfort ye*, which he ornamented too much. The other tenor airs were passably well rendered by Mr. GILBERT. Mr. WETHERBEE was obliged from recent illness to reduce his singing to the bass songs of the first part.

A couple of Chorales from "St. Paul" were among the most satisfactory performances of the evening, as was also Miss Phillipps's singing of the aria, "For the Lord is mindful of his own."

MUSICAL EDUCATION SOCIETY.—The Second Concert, on Monday evening, we were not able to attend; but the programme was greatly superior to the first, in the matter of the solos. These included "ever bright and fair," by HANDEL, "With verdure clad," "Be thou faithful," from "St. Paul;" an air by NEUKOMM; a duet by SPOHR, &c. The choruses were all by Handel, viz. "In glory high," from "Jephthah;" "We with redoubled rage," and another with duet, from "Joshua;" "May all the hosts of Heaven," and Coronation anthem: "Zadock, the Priest." If the other concerts shall be as good we shall be loath to lose them.

New Music.

Carols for Christmas Tide. Set to ancient melodies by Rev. T. HELMORE, M. A. Words by Rev. J. M. NEALE, M. A. Pp. 31. (J. A. Novello, London and New York.)

A beautifully engraved selection of twelve of those ancient melodies, which were sung at Christmas time, all over mediæval Europe, the ground-work of words and music being the same, in spite of national peculiarities. Their quaint old words, half Latin, half vernacular, are in this case freely and very cleverly imitated. The music is given without alteration, as found in the *Pia Cantiones*, published by the Lutheran Communion in Sweden, in 1582; and the melodies are harmonized in plain old church style for four voices, with piano. The carols

have the charm of antiquity, of hallowed association, of quaintness and a certain rude intrinsic beauty.

Novello also has them in the cheaper forms: (1) of the Compressed Vocal Parts, and (2) the Melodies alone with the words.

Come into the garden, Maud: Serenade from TENNYSON'S "Maud." By J. C. D. PARKER. (O. Ditson.)

It was rather a dangerous matter, to attempt to render Tennyson's dainty verses into music. Because the words are perfect *without* music; or rather they *are* music; and because this dainty poet has the daintiest admirers, and who can so catch his tone, his spirit as to hope to suit these? We only wonder therefore that the composer has succeeded so well. The song is charming; only we think the leading motive of the melody has rather too light a sentiment; but it has a deeper passion as it proceeds, and from the line: "There has fallen a splendid tear," onward, there commences a fine impassioned climax. The accompaniment and treatment generally, bating one or two questionable little fancies, are artistic. It is one of the most promising songs that we have seen by any of our young composers.

L'Art du Chant, &c., by THALBERG, Nos. 11 and 12. (O. Ditson.)

These complete this fine series of standard melodies made to sing themselves on the piano; and these are choice indeed, being that "Minna and Brenda" sort of a Duet from *Der Freyschütz*, and Mozart's *Il mio tesoro*.

1. *Sombre Forêt:* Romance from "William Tell," ROSINI.

2. *Shakespeare's Serenade:* "Hark! the Lark!" FRANZ SCHUBERT. (Nathan Richardson, Musical Exchange.)

These are the two exquisite pieces sung with such effect by Mrs. J. H. LONG at our Orchestral Concerts. The Romanza from "Tell" is one of the purest inspirations of the great melodist. It is here given with the French and English words. Schubert's *Hark! the Lark* is a perfect song of its kind, and, if too short, too perfect for the great concert room, will win admirers in every house blessed with the real love of song.

A number of notices are unavoidably crowded out this week, including one of Mr. PARKER's excellent little "Manual of Harmony," which we can but advise all beginners of the study to procure.

The subscription list for OTTO DRESEL'S Soirées is filling up finely. We hope to announce time and particulars by next week. The next Concert of the MENDELSSOHN QUINTETT CLUB (forget it not) will be on MONDAY evening instead of Tuesday. The programme, it will be seen, offers some rare novelties. For the third ORCHESTRAL CONCERT, next Saturday, the younger Miss HENSLEY will sing, and WILLIAM MASON will play Weber's *Concert-stück*. These, with the *Pastorale*, and the "Mid-summer Night's Dream," and an overture by Cherubini, ought to draw an audience.

The proposed *afternoon* Orchestral Concert is reluctantly abandoned, owing to the engagements of so many members of the orchestra at that hour.

Advertisements.

MISS ADELAIDE PHILLIPPS
Again in the 'Messiah' and 'St. Paul.'

THE MENDELSSOHN CHORAL SOCIETY,
with the generously offered aid of Miss PHILLIPPS, Mrs. LONG, Miss BOTHAMLY, Mr. ECKHARDT, Mr. WETHERBEE, Mr. BABCOCK, Mr. GILBERT, and the Gentlemen of the Orchestra, take pleasure in announcing a repetition of the programme given last Sabbath evening, with so great success as to have elicited many requests for another performance.

Their SECOND ORATORIO will therefore take place at the

TREMONT TEMPLE,
On Sunday Evening next, Dec. 16,
Commencing at 6½ o'clock.

The Society trusts, that with the kind patronage of their friends and the public, the effects of the *extremely adverse circumstances* under which their first performance was given, may be retrieved.

Tickets 50 cents each, at usual places: Members can obtain them of Messrs. S. A. Stetson & Co. 350 Washington St. R. Kemp, 173 Hanover St., and E. L. Balch, Office Journal of Music, 21 School St.

OTTO DRESEL respectfully announces that he will give a series of

FOUR MUSICAL SOIRÉES,
in the Messrs CHICKERING'S Rooms, commencing about the middle of next month. Further particulars hereafter.

ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS.

THE THIRD

OF THE SUBSCRIPTION SERIES OF SIX

GRAND ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS

Will be given at the

BOSTON MUSIC HALL,

On Saturday Evening, Dec. 22d, 1855.

With the assistance of

Miss LOUISE HENSLEY, Vocalist, and

Mr. WILLIAM MASON, Pianist.

Conductor.....CARL ZERRAHN.

PROGRAMME.

Part I.

1. Sinfonia Pastorale, in F, No. 6.....Beethoven.
2. Romanza from "Il Giuramento,".....Mercadante.
Sung by Miss LOUISE HENSLEY.
3. Overture to "Medea,".....Cherubini.

Part II.

1. "Concert-Stück," for Piano and Orchestra.....Von Weber.
Played by WILLIAM MASON.
2. Aria: "Batti, batti," from Don Juan.....Mozart.
Sung by Miss LOUISE HENSLEY.
3. Overture to "Midsummer Night's Dream,".....Mendelssohn.

Tickets Fifty Cents each, to be obtained at the usual places. Also, in sets of six, good for any of the remaining concerts, at \$2.50 per set.
Doors open at 6¼. Commence at 7¼ o'clock.

GRAND SACRED CONCERT

AT Rev. Dr. PUTNAM'S CHURCH, Roxbury.

M. ADOLPH BAUMBACH respectfully announces to the citizens of Roxbury and vicinity that he will give a Grand Sacred Concert at the above Church, SUNDAY EVENING, Dec. 16, 1855.

He will be assisted by the following artists:

Mrs. GEORGIANNA R. LEACH, (Late Mrs. Stuart.) Mr. S. W. LEACH, Mr. ARTHURSON, Mrs. FOWLE, Mrs. HEAD, Mr. Low and Mr. UPHAM, in addition to a chorus of thirty performers.
Conductor, Mr. ADOLPH BAUMBACH; Organist, Mr. L. H. SOUTHARD.

Tickets 50 cents each (children half-price,) to be obtained at the Norfolk House, White's apothecary store, Bicknell's and Backup's bookstores, and at the church on the evening of the performance.

Doors open at 6¼ o'clock—to commence at 7¼.
P. S. There will be between the hours of 6 and 7 o'clock next Sunday evening Roxbury omnibuses at the usual stand in Boston, to convey persons to the church in Roxbury and back to Boston at the close of the concert.

CHAMBER CONCERTS.—Seventh Series.

The Mendelssohn Quintette Club's THIRD CONCERT

Will take place on MONDAY EVENING, Dec. 17th, 1855, at Messrs. Chickering's Rooms, assisted by J. C. D. PARKER, Pianist. A new Piano Trio, by Th. Gouvy,—Quintette in G, No. 75, by Haydn,—Schubert's famous Posthumous Quartette in D minor, (first time in Boston),—David's Salon Duet for Violin and Piano, etc. will be presented.

Tickets for the series of Eight, (used at pleasure,) \$5. Single tickets \$1 each. Concert will commence at 7¼ precisely.

MR. J. M. MOZART will give his SECOND CONCERT in Cambridgeport at Athenæum Hall, on Monday Evening, Dec. 17th, at 8 o'clock.

THE MESSIAH AT CHRISTMAS.

HANDEL'S MESSIAH will be performed by the HANDEL AND HAYDN SOCIETY on SUNDAY EVENING, Dec. 23, at the Music Hall.

—ASSISTED BY—

Miss ADELAIDE PHILLIPPS,
Mrs. E. A. WENTWORTH,
Mrs. GEORGIANNA R. LEACH,
Mr. HARRISON MILLARD,
Mr. STEPHEN W. LEACH.

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Of the Season Tickets, those numbered five only will admit to this Concert.

H. L. HAZELTON,
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Mr. B. may be addressed at Nathan Richardson's, Oliver Ditson's, and Reed & Co.'s Music Stores, Boston, or at Alonzo Tripp's, Principal of the Young Ladies' Institute, now opening at 35 Centre street, Roxbury.

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